

Scripture Readings and Sermon

April 21, 2019 by Rev. Mark Brechin

Commentary on Acts 10:34-43 (Youtube [Lectionary Study Video](#))

This is the last of five speeches given by Peter in which he proclaims that God raised Jesus. The first one (2:14-36) is given on the day of Pentecost when about three thousand came to believe. His next proclamation came after he and John healed a man in Jesus' name (3:12-26). Peter then proclaimed Jesus' resurrection to the Jewish authorities who ordered him to stop (4:8-12). The fourth proclamation to the Jews was after God released Peter from prison and he returned to preaching at the temple (5:29-32). Stephen was soon martyred and the open preaching in Jerusalem declined. The sermon Peter gives in this passage is to a Gentile family in Caesarea. The focus of the message moves from Jesus as the predicted Jewish Messiah to Jesus as God chosen to save the world. Faith and not tradition now becomes the standard for salvation and faith shows no partiality. The message of the resurrection becomes a message of universal hope.

Commentary on 1 Corinthians 15:19-26

At the time of Jesus, there were a number of wise rabbis some of whose teachings were very close to Jesus. There are also stories of miracle workers and healers. If we follow Jesus just because of his wise teaching or miracles, Paul says that we are most to be pitied. Even Jesus' suffering and death on the cross in which he forgave his captors was simply a noble death if not for the resurrection. The resurrection, for Paul, changes everything. The resurrection by God validates all of Jesus' teachings and reveals him to be both the Son of Man and the Son of God. Death, which was the consequence of being expelled from Eden because of the sin of disobedience, has been overcome by the resurrection of Jesus. Adam's disobedience has been erased by Jesus' obedience. One man brought death and the other offers life. The resurrection not only means that Jesus is alive but that all who believe are given new life. Christ is Risen and so are we!

Commentary on Luke 24:1-12 (Youtube [Lectionary Study Video](#))

The story of resurrection morning varies between the four gospels. Luke and Mark make it clear that, while the Pharisees in Matthew may have expected some "resurrection hoax" and stationed guards, the women arrived at the tomb with spices expecting to find Jesus. While in John the women saw the empty tomb and ran back to the disciples, in the other gospels the women went into the tomb and found someone. In Matthew, they encountered the angels and in Mark they found a "young man" which some have said was Jesus. In Luke, there were two men, like the two witnesses at the transfiguration, who told them that Jesus was raised as he promised. Luke, however, omits the message to go to Galilee that is in Matthew, Mark, and is portrayed in John. In Matthew and John, Jesus is encountered by the women. For Luke, however, Jesus is walking down the road to Emmaus. Like John, Luke has Peter running to investigate the tomb not because the women were afraid but because they did not believe them. While the details may vary, the overall message of the gospels is the same - Jesus Is Risen!

Sermon Summary (Youtube [Sermon Video](#))

He is not here, but has risen. These are the words spoken by the two men at Jesus' tomb. Luke's resurrection story goes on to say that Jesus was to be found on the road which went to Emmaus. Jesus was not hanging around in the graveyard for as the two men said to the women, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?" Jesus did not come to bring death but life and life abundantly

(John 10:10). The wages of sin is death but "the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23) While it is important to "Go to Dark Gethsemane" and remember "The Old Rugged Cross", Jesus "has died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God." (Romans 6:10) As the Book of Hebrews explains, "Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins." (Hebrews 10:12)

If Christ has died **once for all time**, then why do we keep looking for Jesus in the graveyard or on a cross? If "we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied" says Paul to the Corinthians. But we do more than hope in Christ, we live in Christ for Christ is alive today! He is not just some character in history but is our living Savior today. Death is not the end but only the beginning of the story of Christ. Peter experience this story when Jesus continued to draw people like the Roman soldier who Peter baptized. As a result, Peter said "I truly understand that God shows no partiality". Peter doesn't witness to the cross but he witnesses to the resurrection which overcomes even death on a cross. Jesus died for us so that we might live for him. While others may realize that because of our mortality that in life we are in the midst of death, because of the resurrection we *know* that even in the midst of death we are in life! May you experience new life and in Christ find the abundant life God has planned for you!